

Message Text

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ACTION L-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 H-03 SCS-03 SCA-01 RSR-01 RSC-01

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1431

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC, CDES, UR

SUBJ: TRANSFER OF US INHERITANCES TO LITHUANIA

REF: PARA 2, STATE 160635

1. EMBASSY HAS NO INFORMATION SUPPORTING ALLEGATIONS THAT FUNDS FROM US ESTATES HAVE BEEN "FORCIBLY" TAKEN FROM LITHUANIAN BENEFICIARIES. EMBASSY IN FACT FINDS REPORT IMPLAUSIBLE.

2. WITH RESPECT TO QUESTION WHETHER SOVIET BENEFICIARIES ARE RECEIVING "FULL USE AND BENEFIT" OF PROCEEDS OF US ESTATE, EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS THIS COMPLEX ISSUE IS PERIODICALLY CONFRONTED BY COURTS AS WELL AS PARTIES TO ESTATE CASES IN US. TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, EMBASSY HAS DECLINED AS RULE TO COMMENT ON ISSUE AND REFERRED INQUIRES TO DEPARTMENT FOR STANDARD REPLY DESCRIBING IN GENERAL TERMS FACTS OF LIFE IN NON-CONVERTIBILITY SOFT CURRENCY COUNTRIES IN BOTH EASTERN EUROPE AND SOVIET UNION.

3. FOR DEPARTMENT'S BACKGROUND, DOLLARS TRANSFERRED TO SOVIET BENEFICIARIES ARE USUALLY EXCHANGED BY BENEFICIARIES INTO CERTIFICATES OF RUBLE DENOMINATION PURSUANT TO OFFICIAL SOVIET EXCHANGE RATE. THUS, SOVIET BENEFICIARY PRESENTLY RECEIVES CERTIFICATES WORTH ABOUT 71 RUBLES FOR EACH \$100 OF ESTATE PROCEEDS. (MOSCOW LAW COLLEGIUM INYURKOLLEGIYA INITIALLY CLAIMS FEE OF UP TO 10 PER CENT ESTATE'S VALUE

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FOR LEGAL EXPENSES). CERTIFICATES CAN THEN BE USED TO PURCHASE

GOOS AT VNESHPOSYLTORG OUTLETS, OF WHICH WE NOTE THERE IS ONE IN VILNIUS, LITHUANIA. CURRENT REPRESENTATIVE PRICES (RUBLES) AT SUCH OUTLETS ARE: BOLGA GAZ-24 AUTOMOBILE- 1,625 MAN'S BICICLE -212.88 , ZIL-MOSCOW REFRIGERATOR - 113.90, CHAIKA SEWING MACHINE - 45.90 , RUBIN-401 COLOR TV - 340.00, CHATKA CRAB (227-240 GRAMS) - 1.45, FIVE -STAR ARMENIAN COGNAC - (HALF LITER -1.47, SCOTCH WHISKY (" LONG JOHN" , THREE -FOURTHS LITER) -1.49, STOLICHNAYA VODKA (40 PROOF, .76 LITER) - 1.07, WHETHER OR NOT A BENEFICIARY FEELS HE IS RECEIVING " FULL USE AND BENEFIT" OF US ESTATE PROCEEDS IN PURCHASING ONE OR MORE OF THEF ITEMS AT INDICATED PRICE CAN ONLY BE DESCRIBED AS SUBJECTIVE MATTER.

4. SOVIET BENEFICIARY ALSO HAS OPTION OF DIRECTLY CONVERTING US ESTATE PROCEEDS INTO RUBLES OR SIMPLY OPENING ACCOUNT IN FOREIGN CURRENCY (TO WHICH, OF COURSE, HE HAS NO ACCESS UNLESS HE TRAVELS ABROAD, AND THEN, PRESUMABLY, IN LIMITED AMOUNTS).

5. EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS THERE ARE NO INHERITANCE TAXES IN SOVIET UNION.

6. WE HOPE ABOVE INFORMATION IS OF HELP IN RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS CITED IN PARA 2 REFTTEL. AMCONGEN LENINGRAD MAY WISH TO COMMENT WHEN TELEGRAM (WHICH HAS TO BE POUCHED IN VIEW CLASSIFICATION) ARRIVES AT POST.
DUBS

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